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Item 12 of the preliminary list*
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Substantive session of 1992
Items 9 and 12 of the provisional agenda**
SPECIAL ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The unification of Yemen: support of the international community for its economic and social infrastructure

Assistance to Yemen

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 45/193 of 21 December 1990, the General Assembly, welcoming the formation of the Republic of Yemen and also realizing the difficult economic situation facing Yemen as a result of the merger of the economic and social infrastructures of the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen following their unification, in addition to the new economic and social burden resulting from the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, expressed solidarity with Yemen and called upon States and governmental and international non-governmental organizations to extend their assistance in support of the national efforts to improve the economic and social infrastructure of Yemen. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to assist in mobilizing resources and to consider developing a comprehensive programme to assess the needs of Yemen

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* A/47/50.

** E/1992/100.

resulting from the unification, in order to enable the international community to extend assistance to meet those needs; and also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1992.

2. In its resolution 1991/62, of 26 July 1991, the Economic and Social Council, noting that, in his report on assistance for the reconstruction and development of Yemen, 1/ the Secretary-General emphasized that the continuous assistance and support of the international community to the Government of Yemen remained essential and imperative, and noting also General Assembly resolution 45/193, urged the international community to continue to respond to United Nations resolutions concerning assistance to Yemen and requested the Secretary-General to report on the resolution to the Council at its regular session of 1992.

II. POST-UNIFICATION SITUATION

3. The principles adopted at the time of the unification of the Republic of Yemen introduced considerable changes in the way its society has been organized and managed. The multi-party democracy based on freedom of political association and freedom of the press, coupled with a preference for a market economy, touched on many aspects of life in the country, revolutionizing it quite substantially in some areas. Additionally, trying to minimize the social cost connected with unification, Yemen introduced a 30-month transitional period (till November 1992), in which some solutions and institutional arrangements were allowed to coexist pending final restructuring. All this by itself put tremendous stress on the Yemeni institutions and, in many cases, raised demand for additional funding.

4. Throughout the reporting period, two additional factors have contributed to the general pressure on resources: (a) the sudden return of approximately 850,000 Yemeni migrants from countries in the region; and (b) a sharp decrease in aid from traditional sources of assistance, which found no substitute. The political turmoil in the neighbouring African countries has been sending to Yemen an increasing group of refugees. Drought - similar to the dry spell affecting much of sub-Saharan Africa - and an earthquake are two natural disasters adding to the overall increased demand for resources.

5. The Government of Yemen has been using the transitional period, inter alia, to identify developmental priorities and to reshape the economic policy framework. Through changes in the area of exchange policy, price control and import-export regulations, a vast part of the Yemeni economy is able to treat prices as communicators of cost and indicators of demand and use them therefore for investment decisions. The new investment law was drawn up and adopted in order to facilitate and encourage domestic and foreign private investment. The Government not only encourages new private investment but has adopted a firm policy of privatization of public holdings in the manufacturing, agricultural and service sectors. A large part of interest

rates is presently regulated by the market. Despite a huge wage bill in the budget and the still substantial budget deficit, the gap has been narrowed mainly by decreased military spending and improved revenue collection.

6. The above-described positive changes in economic policy will take time to undergo further fine-tuning and start bearing a positive, invigorating effect on the economy. Right now the cost of unification, the negative effects of wars and political upheaval in the region (the Gulf and the Horn of Africa), drought and the earthquake, coupled with unsettled financial obligations inherited by the Republic of Yemen from the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, far outweigh the available resources. Therefore, the need for financial, capital and specially technical assistance to Yemen persists.

III. MOBILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

A. Round-table conference

7. As part of the overall effort of redefining social and economic life in the country, as well as solidifying relations with the outside partners in development, the Republic of Yemen requested the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist in preparing and holding the first round-table conference for Yemen. This conference is scheduled to take place at Geneva on 30 June and 1 July 1992. The aim of the conference is to present in great detail the recently adopted and introduced social and economic policy as well as the developmental goals of the new country and to discuss the general and sectoral policies with the aid, trade and investment partners of Yemen. Yemen wishes to use the conference for a long-range look at its relationships and partnerships with countries and international institutions, to strike a proper balance between ties based on aid and those based on trade and investment, giving the latter ones ever-growing importance with the passing time.

8. The mechanism of the follow-up sectoral meetings, which will be organized as a result of the round-table conference, will assist the Government of Yemen and all its developmental partners to construct detailed, comprehensive capital and technical assistance programming frameworks for the key social and economic sectors. They will cover the policy and developmental goals aspect as well as, hopefully, comprehensive resource requirements and their availability.

9. The documentation prepared in connection with the round-table conference 2/ (for example, the general economic memorandum and sectoral annexes) constitutes a compendium of knowledge about Yemen's social and economic policy, developmental goals and assistance needs.

B. UNDP country programme (1992-1996)

10. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) approved at its May 1992 session of the Governing Council the first country programme for the Republic of Yemen. Thanks to the decisions of the June 1991 session of the Governing Council - UNDP put at the disposal of Yemen for the present financial cycle (1992-1996) technical assistance funds at the uncut level, combining the levels of resources allocated to the former Yemen Arab Republic and the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen during the previous financial cycle.

11. The UNDP country programme for Yemen constitutes a general technical assistance programming framework, which benefited also from the programming effort of other United Nations funds and organizations (for example, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization), as well as from discussions with many interested bilateral donors. The programme recognizes that the technical assistance presently most needed by Yemen is in the area of management development, including formulation, on the basis of solid data, developmental strategies, programmes and plans, institutional restructuring, financial management and civil service reform. Human development in Yemen was also highlighted in the programme with the goal of raising dramatically the very low social indicators, expanding the medical and educational services. Environmentally sustainable development and specially development and management of the scarce water resources was also put among the priorities for future technical assistance.

Notes

1/ A/46/217-E/1991/94.

2/ The documentation is available through the Government of Yemen or through the United Nations Development Programme.

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Agenda item 13
PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OVER
NATIONAL RESOURCES IN THE
OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN AND
OTHER ARAB TERRITORIES

Economic and social consequences of the establishment of settlements by Israel in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Syrian Golan

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The question of the establishment of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 and their social and economic consequences has been dealt with in many reports. In 1979, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 446 (1979) in which it determined that the Israeli policy and practices of establishing settlements in these territories had no legal validity and constituted a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. This position was reaffirmed unanimously in resolution 465 (1980), the preamble of which emphasizes the need to consider measures for the impartial protection of public and private land, property, and the area's water resources. In 1980, the International Labour Conference also expressed its concern regarding the establishment of settlements, and called for an end to this policy and for existing settlements to be dismantled.

2. In 1991, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) submitted a report on the subject of the Israeli settlements to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly (A/46/263-E/1991/88). In 1992,

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* A/47/50.

the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories prepared a report on the same issue which was transmitted to the General Assembly in document A/47/76. Recently, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) issued a report on the situation of workers of the occupied territories and submitted it to the International Labour Conference at its seventy-ninth session (1992). 1/

3. The term "settlement" in this paper is meant to apply to any Israeli civil or military installation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. Israel has extended its jurisdiction, legislation and administration to East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan. It should be noted that Israeli legislation applies to the settlers, regardless of the fact that they reside outside the territory of the State of Israel.

4. The building of settlements began immediately after the Six-Day War in 1967, with the first being established in the Golan Heights; settlements are planned and controlled by the Government. This policy has been developed more or less intensively since that time, and at an even more accelerated pace since the beginning of 1991. Massive Jewish immigration to Israel from the Commonwealth of Independent States, the countries of Eastern Europe, and Ethiopia (approximately 200,000 in 1990 and 200,000 in 1991) has led the Government to intensify the building of housing in the territories of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan. 1/ The increase in prices and demand for housing in Israel has led many Israelis to move to the settlements in the occupied territories. They are encouraged to do so - mainly through financial and tax incentives offered by the Government. Loans are more concessionary, infrastructure is provided free of charge, and there are substantial tax discounts. During the 1990 fiscal year, the Government of Israel spent (on the settlements) a total of 1,500 million shekels in the occupied territories, which is equal to three times the amount spent during any other year in the territories since 1967. 2/

5. According to a report by the Central Bureau of Statistics (Jerusalem Post, 6 April 1992), "the number of building starts in the territories quadrupled during 1991, while building starts country-wide doubled", making it extremely difficult for the Arab population to obtain building permits. In addition, 5,565 mobile and prefabricated homes were installed in 1991, according to information obtained from the Ministry of Finance. 3/ The increased investment by the authorities is the result of a political determination expressed from the beginning of the occupation of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), the Golan and the Gaza Strip. It has been reiterated on several occasions by the Minister of Housing that "Israel will continue its 'unprecedented' settlement activity" in the territories and "there has been no change in the Government's decision to build" on land throughout this region (Jerusalem Post, 31 January 1992).

6. On 8 April 1992, the Council of Jewish Communities launched a major campaign to encourage tens of thousands of Jews to move to houses currently under construction in the territories; the aim was to settle 70,000 persons within a year in the occupied territories.

7. On 26 August 1991, the Housing Minister outlined at a Knesset debate his plan for the long-term construction of settlements in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. The plan included a ring of new housing units around Jerusalem and Jericho, and the expansion and/or construction of others near Nablus and Tulkarim and in the Gaza Strip. In total, there were about 19,000 units at various stages of construction in the occupied territories as of 12 September 1991 (Ha'aretz, 12 September 1991). In addition, a new neighbourhood of 300 housing units is to be set up in north-east Jerusalem so as to establish a succession of Jewish settlements around the city. The Arabs represent 55 per cent of the residents of East Jerusalem, while the Jews represent 45 per cent (or 140,000 Arabs and 120,000 Jews). The Government wants to establish a Jewish majority in East Jerusalem by directing 60,000 emigrants to Jerusalem in the next three years (Ha'aretz, 20 September 1991).

8. On 11 October 1991, it was reported that some 4,300 new emigrants had settled in the territories since January 1990, as indicated by the Finance Ministry's latest information (Jerusalem Post, 11 October 1991).

9. On 4 November 1991, a new settlement (Bruchim) was inaugurated in the Golan Heights by the Ministers of Housing, Energy and Agriculture. The settlement should be established within the next three years and will house over 40,000 people (Ha'aretz, 6 October 1991 and Jerusalem Post, 5 November 1991).

10. In the occupied territories, the indigenous Arab community - governed by a civil administration under the authority of the Israeli Ministry of Defence and subject to specific legislation - develops separately from the newly established Jewish Israeli community. This dual legal and administrative system applicable to the two peoples was highlighted in the country report on human rights practices for 1990 of the United States Department of State. The report emphasizes that "Palestinians - both Muslim and Christian - are treated less favourably than Israeli settlers on a broad range of issues, including equality before the law, the right to residence, freedom of movement, sale of crops and goods, land and water use, and access to health and social services". The Palestinian human rights organization Al-Haq (affiliated with the International Commission of Jurists) adds in this respect that "In fact, Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, including in East Jerusalem governed by Israeli law, are designed to benefit the Israeli population of the settlers to the detriment of the autochthonous Palestinian population." Al-Haq and other Palestinian sources pointed out that the benefits and subsidies granted to settlers by the Government are components of a situation in which 65 per cent of the Arab lands of the West Bank were confiscated illegally by the authorities and where Palestinian towns and villages are encircled and isolated by the plans for the development of the settlements. Furthermore, there are no projects for the urban or rural development of the Palestinian agglomerations or for their improvement or expansion. 4/

11. Over the course of time, the Israeli Government has expropriated - and continues to expropriate - the Arab land of the occupied territories, whether cultivated, non-cultivated, pasture or inhabited, under four separate categories:

(a) The land "abandoned" by the populations displaced since 1948;

(b) The land formerly registered in the name of the Government of Jordan, and the land of Arab owners who have never been able to prove ownership;

(c) Land confiscated for military purposes;

(d) Land which is deemed to serve Israeli public interest.

12. In addition, Arab land is also subject to restrictions concerning its use under Military Order No. 393 of 1970 - applied in cases where land surrounds settlements, camps, military installations or access routes to the settlements. In some regions, fertile Palestinian land has been sacrificed to secure access routes; many vineyards have been destroyed between Bethlehem and Hebron for this purpose.

13. On the basis of the applied Israeli laws and regulations, the following land areas were confiscated between June 1967 and the end of 1990: 5/

(a) A total of 2,895,642 dunums in the occupied West Bank, representing 52.6 per cent of the total land area of the West Bank;

(b) A total of 153,475 dunums in the Gaza Strip, representing 42.3 per cent of the total land area of the Gaza Strip;

(c) 69.4 per cent of the total land area of the Syrian Golan.

14. According to Israeli statistics, there were 82,000 settlers as of 31 December 1990, divided between the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. This figure does not reflect the real situation at present, since in 1991 settlements grew at a rate of 60 per cent, according to Palestinian sources and the Israeli Peace Now movement (Jerusalem Post, 23 January 1992). The Israeli Ministry of Finance stated in January 1992 that there were 130,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem, where there are more than 120,000) and 4,000 to 5,000 in the Gaza Strip; in the Golan, there are allegedly more than 13,000. The number of settlers in the occupied territories is thus around 268,000. The total number of settlements is estimated at 194: 33 in the Golan, 17 in the Gaza Strip, 8 in East Jerusalem and 136 in the West Bank. 6/

15. Whether in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, the development of Jewish settlements has only worsened the socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian population and is a source of tension. Clashes occur with increasing frequency between the two communities, and the Israeli settlers have organized themselves into an armed militia. 6/

16. A study prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territories (TD/B/1142) indicated that the policy, practices and measures of the Israeli Government vis-à-vis their occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip had brought about radical changes in the structure of the economy, adversely affecting economic growth and development in the occupied territories and reducing the contribution to GDP. The study demonstrated clearly that the total cultivated area had decreased from 36 per cent of the total land area of the occupied West Bank in 1966 to 27 per cent in 1984, and in the occupied Gaza Strip, from 55 per cent of the total area in 1966 to 28 per cent in 1985.

17. Confiscation of land adversely affected agricultural production and income in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; income from agriculture declined from 1,505 million shekels in 1978 to 1,488 million shekels in 1984 at constant 1980 prices. As a result, the share of agriculture in GDP declined (at constant prices) from 32 per cent in 1978 to 28 per cent in 1984, according to another UNCTAD study (UNCTAD/ST/SEU/4).

18. According to the same study, income from agriculture in the West Bank declined from $237 million in 1981 to $204 million in 1985. In the Gaza Strip, it declined from $66 million in 1981 to $61 million in 1985, in spite of the fact that farmers were making increasing use of modern techniques in order to improve agricultural production in those areas.

19. As a result of the negative impact of the confiscation of agricultural land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, employment in agriculture fell from 38.7 per cent of the total workforce in 1970 to 24.4 per cent in 1985.

20. According to a report of the ILO, on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories, submitted to the International Labour Conference at its seventy-seventh session in 1990, "Endogenous development efforts are frequently frustrated or undone for administrative or security reasons." 7/ While evaluating the impact of Israeli policies and practices on the agricultural sector, the report highlighted the following points:

(a) Agriculture remains the backbone of the economy but performance over the decade has been disappointing for lack of land, water and markets; 8/

(b) Despite increased productivity as a result of the introduction of new technologies in agriculture, corresponding new marketing opportunities were lacking;

(c) "Agricultural employment in the occupied territories dropped from almost 60,000 workers in 1970 to 38,500 workers in 1987." The share of agricultural employment also dropped from 40 per cent to around 25 per cent: "In other words, thousands of workers left because they or their employers had lost their land or could not expand for lack of water; or because they could

not compete in the home market with subsidized imports from Israel; or because they found barriers to buying farm inputs or to selling their products abroad." 9/

21. The general settlement policy of confiscating land and imposing restrictions on water resouces has meant that a large proportion of the population that would normally have earned a living by traditional agriculture have gradually begun to seek employment in Israel as unskilled workers because of the lack of jobs in the territories. This appears to be partially responsible for the economic dependence of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories on Israel, particularly as regards agricultural produce.

22. Mention should also be made of the uprooting of fruit trees by Israeli authorities from Arab farm land in the occupied territories. The Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz (29 March 1989) noted that the Israeli authorities had uprooted 23,400 trees in the occupied territories during the first year of the intifadah.

23. A survey concerning fruit trees uprooted from Arab farmers' land in the occupied territories was published in the 1989 annual report of the Jordan Ministry of Labour, as shown in the following table.

24. No less than 30,000 fruit trees were uprooted in 1989 from Arab farm land through actions by the occupation authorities connected with the confiscation of Arab land; 16,928 of these were olive trees. The number of towns and villages affected by these actions in the same year was 138.

25. As regards water resources, the Israeli authorities have issued a series of orders (orders 92 and 158 of 1967 and order 498 of 1974) to guarantee their complete monopoly over these resources, to allow them to control water transfer, extraction, consumption, sales and distribution, use, water sharing and rationing, well drilling, the construction of water installations and the like.

26. The Arab inhabitants of the Syrian Golan have been forced to demolish some of their own reservoirs, and the Israeli army has dynamited a number of others. 10/ At present, only three or four reservoirs are authorized for use out of approximately 400 that had been built in the Golan. The Israeli authorities have imposed tight restrictions on water use in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan. Permits are sometimes granted to drill wells to depths not exceeding 60 metres for domestic purposes only, while Israelis in the settlements are allowed to drill to depths of up to 500 metres.

27. Several hundred water pumps owned by Arab farmers in the Jordan Valley area of the West Bank have been destroyed for security reasons. Irrigation canals which supplied water to Arab farms in the area of Al-Jiftlik have also been destroyed. This has had an adverse effect on agriculture and on the economic and social life of these areas.

Destruction of trees and crops, 1989

Month	Olive trees uprooted	Citrus trees uprooted	Other fruit trees uprooted	Number of Arab towns and villages affected
January	2 285	210	90	14
February	925	105	200	10
March	1 417	..	330	9
April	3 337	100	7 000	16
May	4 110	2 400 dunums of crops ploughed under	12 dunums of grapes	22
June	847	50 dunums of crops ploughed under	550 dunums sprayed with chemical substances	10
July	120	300	3	8
August	2 033	112	4 dunums ploughed under	12
September	621	380	430	12
October	177	60	2 620	14
November	251	30	..	5
December	805	..	..	6

Source: Compiled from Government of Jordan, Ministry of Labour, Research Department, "The impact of Israeli policies and practices on the conditions of Arab workers in the occupied Arab territories" (in Arabic), Annual Report, 1989 (Amman, January 1990).

28. Ram Lake, the largest body of water in the Syrian Golan, has been seized by the Israeli authorities. As a result, villages in the Golan have suffered a critical shortfall in drinking and irrigation water, while the water of Ram Lake has been diverted to Israeli settlements to satify the needs of the settlers and their agricultural and industrial projects in the area.

29. The consequences of Israeli water policies and practices may be described as follows:

(a) A state of conflict and competition over land and water resources has arisen and continues to prevail; this has had an adverse impact on the living conditions of Palestinians. The Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley, for example, are in direct competition with the Arab villages for the limited resources of the West Bank; 11/

(b) The usable groundwater reserves in the West Bank are estimated at approximately 600 million m^3 per year. The Israeli occupation authorities are currently pumping approximately 500 million m^3 per year, leaving only 100 million m^3 per year for use by the West Bank, or 16.6 per cent of the total water available in the West Bank;

(c) The deep wells drilled by the Israeli authorities in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories have affected the level and quantity of water in Arab wells, resulting in their reduced productive capacity and in the drying up of some of those wells and in the subsequent drying up of agricultural land that depended on those wells for irrigation water;

(d) The overexploitation of groundwater in the Gaza Strip and the great increase in water use by settlers in Israeli settlements have resulted in increased salinity through sea-water intrusion. Approximately 50 per cent of the wells in the Gaza Strip have become unfit for human use, and most of them are unfit even for irrigation, owing to the high salinity levels;

(e) As in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the continued arbitrary practices of the Israeli occupation authorities, which aim at confiscating land and gaining control of water resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, have reduced the area under cultivation, curtailed local development potential and lowered local incomes derived from work in agriculture.

Notes

1/ International Labour Office, Report of the Director-General, Appendices, vol. II (Geneva, 1992), paras. 116 and 117.

2/ Amiram Goldbloom, "Are settlements an obstacle to peace?" New Outlook, June/July/August 1991.

Notes (continued)

3/ Ha'aretz, reprinted in the Palestinian newspaper Al-Quds, 23 January 1991.

4/ International Labour Office, Report of the Director-General, Appendices ..., paras. 116, 117 and 121.

5/ "Israeli land and water policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories" (A/46/263-E/1991/88), para. 38.

6/ International Labour Office, Report of the Director-General, Appendices ..., paras. 124 and 126.

7/ Ibid., appendix II, "Report on the situation of workers in occupied Arab territories" (Geneva, 1990).

8/ Ibid., para. 21.

9/ Ibid., para. 41.

10/ Ibid., para. 111.

11/ David Kahan, "Agriculture and water in the West Bank and Gaza", report of the West Bank database project (Jerusalem, 1983), pp. 163-166.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

Report of the Acting President of the Council on consultations held with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its second regular session of 1991, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1991/68 of 26 July 1991 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations. In paragraph 16 of that resolution, the Council requested its President to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and to report thereon to the Council.

2. At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/65 of 11 December 1991, in paragraph 22 of which it requested the Council to continue to consider, in consultation with the Special Committee, appropriate measures for the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

3. Taking into account the above-mentioned resolutions, the Acting President is of the view that the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations should strengthen existing measures of support and formulate additional programmes of assistance to the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. As most of the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories are islands, small in size and population, geographically isolated and vulnerable to natural disasters, such as hurricanes and cyclones, as well as relatively undeveloped economically, they are particularly dependent on external assistance. The specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as international and regional organizations, should therefore be invited to examine and review conditions in each of the Territories, commensurate with the pressing needs of the peoples concerned for increased transfer of resources, technology and know-how, and take appropriate measures to accelerate economic and social progress.

4. In accordance with the terms of Council resolution 1991/68, the Acting President of the Council maintained close contact with the Chairman of the Special Committee during the period under review and, on the basis of those contacts and in the light of related developments, submits to the Council the observations set out below, with a view to facilitating Council consideration of the present item.

5. During the year, members of the Council and the Special Committee followed closely the work of their respective bodies relating to the item. The Acting President considers it both useful and essential that such contacts and cooperation continue to be maintained and strengthened to mobilize the maximum possible assistance to the peoples of the remaining Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories.

6. According to the information provided by specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, during the period under review a

number of specialized agencies and organizations have continued to extend assistance to the peoples of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, in response to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Council and the Special Committee. A number of organizations have extended or formulated such programmes of assistance from within their own budgetary resources, in addition to their respective contributions as executing agencies of projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the primary provider of assistance.

7. A number of assistance projects have continued to be funded by UNDP in close collaboration with other agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. The Acting President of the Council notes that the fifth cycle (1992-1996) indicative planning figures (IPFs) established for some of those Territories include the following: Anguilla, US$ 1,266,000; British Virgin Islands, $102,000; Cayman Islands, $385,000; Montserrat, $539,000; Saint Helena, $1,405,000; Tokelau, $1,197,000; Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau), $326,000; and Turks and Caicos Islands, $971,000. These amounts cover assistance in the primary economic sectors, such as tourism, agriculture, fisheries industry, transportation, communication and power generation, as well as in the social and educational sectors, and are being executed by a number of specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in close cooperation, where appropriate, with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

8. The Acting President of the Council draws attention to the extremely fragile economies of these small island Territories and stresses the continuing critical needs of their people. While noting with appreciation the increased assistance being rendered to those Territories, the Acting President appeals to the specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to focus their renewed attention on all Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories so as to expand and increase their assistance programmes to them. The Acting President of the Council is particularly mindful of the pressing need for external assistance of a number of dependent Territories for which no IPF had yet been established. The need for assistance to those Territories is extremely acute.

9. Renewed efforts must be made to secure an increased flow of funds. Bearing in mind the need for maximum flexibility, the involved institutions should take steps to remove any existing constraints or difficulties so as to ensure the availability of the additional resources required. The role of the executive heads of the institutions concerned is of special importance. In keeping with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 46/65 and paragraph 12 of Council resolution 1991/68, the executive heads should formulate concrete proposals for consideration by the respective governing and legislative organs. At the same time, the agencies and organizations that have depended to a large extent on extrabudgetary sources for financing of assistance projects should continue to try to find ways of including or increasing provision in their regular budgets for projects for the peoples concerned.

10. The importance of strengthening this cooperation cannot but be stressed considering the need for the creation of conditions that would facilitate the exercise by the peoples of the Territories of their legitimate rights to self-determination and independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

11. The Acting President of the Council welcomes the continued initiative of UNDP in maintaining close links with other specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and in coordinating the activities of the agencies in extending assistance to the peoples of the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. The active participation of the representatives of the Governments of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories at meetings and conferences of the agencies and organizations have invariably contributed to the positive consideration given by those bodies to measures in support of the peoples of those Territories. The Acting Prseident is convinced that interactions must be encouraged so that the Territories may draw the maximum possible benefits through active participation in the related activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system. The close contacts have not only facilitated further increases in the volume and scope of assistance provided by the specialized agencies and organizations, but also have enhanced the ability of agencies to respond more quickly and with greater flexibility to needs. In order to make maximum use of the available resources, the agencies and organizations should take further steps to strengthen existing measures and explore additional ways of coordination.

I. SUPPORT BY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM TO TRUST AND NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

International Labour Organisation

12. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), as the executing agency, has delivered technical assistance to Anguilla and Montserrat under projects funded by UNDP.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

13. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is at present in the process of executing four technical assistance projects in the South Pacific, favouring Tokelau and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, with the programmes concentrating mainly on root crops development, as well as on livestock, forestry and fisheries development.

14. Initial activities under a regional project on eradication of the tropical bout tick in the Caribbean are being carried out in Anguilla and Montserrat by FAO in cooperation with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for which funding is being sought.

15. The representatives from the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat have participated at several meetings held at the subregional level to discuss the draft "Caribbean Community Agreement on Cooperation in the Development and Management of the Living Resources of the Exclusive Economic Zone", which was prepared with the assistance of a FAO/TCF/RLAC project, Legal Aspects of a Common Policy on Access to Exclusive Economic Zones. The project, Rehabilitation of the Agricultural Sector, funded by UNDP, is under implementation by FAO in Montserrat. As regards Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands, as well as other small Territories in the Caribbean, FAO has been invited by UNDP to review and comment on the country programme management plans, as well as on the country programmes for the fifth cycle.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

16. During the peiod under review, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) continued its programmes of assistance to Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Those projects related, inter alia, to the development of teaching materials, provision of scholarships, restoration of historical sites, upgrading of information facilities and eradication of illiteracy. In respect of Anguilla, UNESCO, jointly with the British Development Division, has been supporting the development of teaching materials.

World Health Organization

17. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) of the World Health Organization (WHO) provided assistance to Anguilla and Montserrat in the areas of health equipment maintenance, improvement of laboratory facilities dealing with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), immunization and rodent control. PAHO executed approximately 8 per cent of the Anguillan projects funded by UNDP.

United Nations Children's Fund

18. The Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) approved a multi-island programme for the eastern Caribbean, including, inter alia, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, for the period 1988-1992, with available general resources of US$ 2,250,000. Owing to the increased availability of general resources, the annual planning level has been doubled to US$ 900,000 from 1991 onwards. The UNICEF programmes for Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the British Virgin Islands cover projects in the fields of early childhood development, maternal and child health, nutrition, water and sanitation and women in development. Funds allocated for those projects are distributed among the Territories for 1991 and 1992, respectively, as follows: the British Virgin Islands, US$ 17,000 and US$ 21,500; Montserrat, US$ 24,900 and US$ 41,500; and the Turks and Caicos Islands, US$ 15,000 and US$ 40,100. For the period

1993-1997, the Executive Director of UNICEF recommends that the Executive Board approve the multi-island programme for the eastern Caribbean, including the islands mentioned above, in the amount of US$ 5.1 million from general sources and US$ 5 million in supplementary funds, subject to the availability of funds.

United Nations Population Fund

19. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued its programme of assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories within the UNDP framework. For Anguilla, UNFPA assistance in the amount of US$ 32,085 covered a project on family life education and strengthening of family planning services, which has just been concluded, and the formulation of a new project has begun. A mission to Anguilla took place in March 1992 to discuss how best the momentum of the project could continue into the new project. A draft project document has been submitted which emphasizes the training of teachers and parents. UNFPA also assisted in the population census, held in March/April, which showed a significant increase in the population.

20. In the British Virgin Islands, UNFPA executed a family life project, with a contribution of US$ 60,449, which will be reviewed in mid-1992. UNFPA provided partial support to the 1991 census, with assistance amounting to US$ 7,300. UNFPA also extended technical assistance to the British Virgin Islands through a subregional programme with CARICOM on preliminary census data. The Government of the British Virgin Islands has expressed interest in population and development integration strategy. When a formal request is received, a demographer, funded by UNFPA, will undertake a mission to analyse the situation with a view to further development.

21. With regard to the Cayman Islands, UNDP has collaborated with the Government on a national household survey capability programme for which UNFPA has been approached for partial contribution, arrangements for which have not yet been finalized.

22. In Montserrat, the children and youth training project concluded its activities in 1991 for which UNFPA contributed US$ 44,980. The project overall was deemed successful, especially in the areas involving local youths and parents. Intersectoral coordination among the ministries of health and education and the Montserrat Family Planning Asscciation was achieved, which was considered a positive step towards self-reliance and institutional building.

23. At the request of the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands, a consultation mission was conducted by the UNFPA-funded demographer in 1990 for the establishment of a population policy in the islands. With the election of a new Government in 1991, however, Government priorities were rearranged, resulting in a weakened commitment and interest expressed earlier. For the fifth multi-island programme for countries of the eastern Caribbean, UNFPA assistance amounted to US$ 1.2 million.

24. In respect of Territories in the Pacific region, namely, Tokelau and Palau, UNFPA allocated US$ 18 million for the region. UNFPA assistance to Tokelau is in the health sector where it will support maternal child health and family planning (MCH/FP) activities. Other activities include training in the handling of medical equipment, basic drugs and other supplies, including a small boat for the atoll's health services. UNFPA extends support to fellowships at the Fiji Nursing College for health personnel. In order to strengthen the Government capability in management, UNFPA will assist in overseas training in New Zealand and fellowships at the University of the South Pacific in the areas of population and development. In addition, UNFPA is engaged in the provision of data-processing equipment and the conduct of simple surveys and their analysis, with particular focus on environmental considerations and linkages with the future development of the atolls. Other donors' assistance to Tokelau include that rendered by UNICEF and UNDP.

25. With respect to Palau, UNFPA assistance will address main areas of human development, population and environmental concerns. Through an integrated umbrella project, the followiong areas would be addressed: support to the Government of Palau would be provided for the implementation of its MCH/FP strategies and the expansion of quality and quantity of MCH/FP through an increase in the number of expectant mothers attending prenatal services during the first trimester; reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies; increase in the number of men who utilize family planning clinics; strengthening of the working knowledge and skills of the staff to manage the collected data; training in case management and evaluation of public health work; strengthening of the MCH/FP training of health assistants assigned to field dispensaries, support training and other logistical support. In the fields of public information, education and communication (IEC), UNFPA supports awareness among the various groups on health issues; training of trainers and Palau teachers as well as scholarships to Palauans; environment-related programmes in the form of IEC materials, workshops and seminars on environmental management and population issues.

II. SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID: CONSULTATIONS

26. The Acting President of the Economic and Social Council and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid held consultations regarding the recent developments in South Africa and various actions taken by the international community since the second regular session of 1991 of the Council.

27. The Chairman of the Special Committee reviewed with the Acting President of the Council decisions taken by the General Assembly during its forty-sixth session. The Assembly, on 13 December 1991, adopted omnibus resolution 46/79 A-F on agenda item 37, entitled "Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa" and resolution 46/80 on agenda item 102, entitled "United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa". Preserving the consensus that was forged in 1989, the Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 46/79 A on international efforts towards the total eradication of

apartheid and support for the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. In that resolution, the Assembly welcomed the positive developments in South Africa including the signing of the National Peace Accord, the accession of South Africa to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Patriotic/United Front conference and the preparatory meeting for the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). The Assembly expressed grave concern at the persistence of violence and at the remaining obstacles to free political activity. The Assembly appealed to the international community to support the critical process now under way through a phased application of appropriate pressure and to provide assistance to disadvantaged sectors of society and to the front-line States. In view of the progress made, the Assembly recommended the resumption of academic, scientific and cultural links with anti-apartheid organizations and sports links with non-racial sporting organizations. Turning to United Nations activities, the Assembly welcomed the agreement made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with the South African authorities concerning repatriation of refugees and exiles, and offered guidance to the Secretary-General regarding the resumption of assistance inside South Africa including assistance aimed at addressing socio-economic issues. The Secretary-General was requested to ensure the coordination of activities of the United Nations system and to continue monitoring implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa (Assembly resolution S-16/1, annex).

28. In resolution 46/79 B on the programme of work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the General Assembly called for a continuation of monitoring of developments in South Africa and activities of the international community, with emphasis on appropriate pressure and assistance to victims of apartheid. In resolution 46/79 C the Assembly expressed serious concern at continuous violations of the mandatory arms embargo and urged all States to adopt stricter legislation. The Assembly called upon all States to maintain existing financial measures until specific recommendations were made by transitional authorities to be established by Codesa. Resolution 46/79 D deplored military and nuclear collaboration between Israel and South Africa. Resolution 46/79 E reiterated the Assembly's concern at violation of the oil embargo, while resolution 46/79 F expressed support for continued humanitarian, legal and educational assistance to those persecuted and to facilitate reintegration of released prisoners and exiles into South African society.

29. The Assembly also adopted resolution 46/80 entitled "United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa", which called upon all concerned to assist the Programme in facilitating the returnability and job placement of its graduates to South Africa.

30. The Chairman also reviewed with the Acting President of the Council the proceedings and outcome of negotiations held within the framework of Codesa, in which 19 South African parties and organizations participated. Codesa's main priorities for discussion were the creation of a climate for free political activity, including the end of violence, release of political

prisoners and return of exiles; general constitutional principles; establishment of interim arrangements; the reintegration of the homelands; and time-frames and the implementation of Codesa's decisions. While reports presented at its second plenary session held in mid-May 1992, indicated that consensus had been reached on a number of issues, a failure by one working group to reach agreement prevented the consideration of other proposals, as the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) had insisted on the adoption of a complete package of proposals together with precise time-frames for their implementation. This impasse had caused additional delays in the progress for interim arrangements, which heightened frustrations and prompted plans for mass action as an effort of the democratic forces to speed up the negotiation process. The Chairman discussed the ANC policy conference, held in late May 1992, which adopted a comprehensive package of policy guidelines on issues that included the economy, health service, land, trade union rights and a new constitution. The Chairman then stated that it was essential that the international community continue to closely monitor the negotiations and urged all participants, particularly the South African Government, to facilitate the prompt establishment of transitional structures.

31. The Chairman discussed with the Acting President of the Council the wave of violence that had engulfed the country and had further hampered the creation of a free political climate ensuring its citizens their full participation in the political process. The violence had escalated, bringing the total number of victims killed since the signing of the National Peace Accord in September 1991, to more than 2,000. The Goldstone Commission, which was established to investigate the causes of violence, cited the climate of political intolerance, caused by economic, social and political imbalances that prevailed in the country, as one of the factors contributing to the escalation of violence. Allegations of police collusion with perpetrators of violence and revelations of military involvement in assassinations of anti-apartheid activists had strengthened suspicions of the police partiality and lack of interest in attempts to quell the violence. Violence was also viewed as a strategy to slow down the process of change. In a report of the International Commission of Jurists, who recently visited South Africa to study the issue of violence, it was pointed out that unless the army and police were controlled it would not be possible to hold free and fair elections on a one-person, one-vote basis in much of South Africa today. The Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which acknowledged the need for international involvement to put an end to the violence, sent an OAU delegation on a fact-finding mission whose purpose was to monitor and accelerate the democratization process and investigate incidents impeding this process. The South African authorities were urged to take firm steps to prevent criminal conduct by members of the security forces and to punish the perpetrators.

32. The Chairman advised the Acting President that although some 1,000 political prisoners were released in 1991, the release of such prisoners had virtually ceased since the beginning of 1992. The Human Rights Commission of South Africa (HRC) listed 395 political prisoners still held. Substantial progress had been achieved concerning the return of political exiles. By

April 1992, some 3,000 exiles had returned to South Africa under the auspices of the programme undertaken by UNHCR. The ANC had brought back an additional 7,000 exiles. The lower than expected number had been attributed to problems of poor housing and unemployment for these returnees, incidents of police harassment and imprisonment, as well as violence in the townships. There was a serious need for training programmes for returnees as well as efforts to expedite their reintegration into South African society. Aside from the UNHCR, which has become the first United Nations body to have a permanent presence in South Africa, ILO sent a commission of investigation into South Africa to study labour relations. In addition, ILO conducted a tripartite special conference on southern Africa in Harare, Zimbabwe, held on 5-8 May 1992, to discuss labour issues. ILO had pledged to continue support to migrant workers in southern Africa and to provide technical and vocational training to returning migrant workers.

33. To address the problem of the extreme socio-economic disparities among South Africans caused by decades of institutionalized racial segregation, the Chairman referred to resolution 46/79 A which stressed the need for the Secretary-General to expand, at an appropriate time and in a concerted manner, the scope of assistance provided inside South Africa, aimed at addressing socio-economic issues, particularly in areas of education, health, housing and social welfare. In this context, a seminar entitled, "South Africa's socio-economic problems: future role of the United Nations system in helping address them", was held on 22-24 May 1992 at Windhoek, Namibia, which brought together some 30 South African experts from ANC, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), trade unions, universities, industrial and banking agencies and organizations involved in social and economic analysis and policy planning, with senior representatives from United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations. The participants discussed socio-economic problems emanating from apartheid; preliminary assessment of the most urgent needs of the population; priority areas for international assistance; institutional framework for delivery of United Nations assistance; and mobilization of resources. The Chairman stated that in order to ensure sustained political stability in a new democratic South Africa, it was crucial to addresss socio-economic problems urgently.

34. Considering the precarious political situation in South Africa at present, the Chairman stated that the lifting of pressure at this time would be counter-productive to the international community's overall efforts to ensure that the fragile process of change now under way would not be derailed. The Chairman described the strengthening of assistance to disadvantaged segments of society as crucial in preparing South Africans to fully participate in the rebuilding of their country. The United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, which was established for legal assistance to persons persecuted under the system of apartheid, including their families, remained very much relevant as political trials continued and violence had not been contained. The Chairman added that there was an urgent need to strengthen the role of the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa in order to meet the growing and critical educational and training needs of students from South Africa. The Chairman and the Acting

President were of the view that a large trained cadre of Black South Africans would play a critical role in facilitating a smooth transition to a post-apartheid society.

III. CONCLUSION

35. Subject to any directives that the General Assembly might give at its forty-seventh session and in conformity with such decisions as might be taken by the Council, the President of the Council shall continue to maintain close contact with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and with the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid on matters raised in the present report.

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REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 1990/69 of 27 July 1990, the Economic and Social Council decided to review the implementation of the measures agreed upon for the revitalization of the Council, pursuant to its responsibilities for promoting international economic and social cooperation and in accordance with the relevant articles of the Charter of the United Nations, at its second regular session of 1992. At the same time, it will be recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 45/264 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, had requested the Secretary-General to submit an annual progress report to the General Assembly, starting from its forty-seventh session, on the implementation of the result of the restructuring and revitalization process in the economic, social and related fields, in which he was requested further to provide information on any recommendation agreed upon which had not been implemented as scheduled. In addition, the Assembly decided in the same resolution to review the implementation of the provisions of paragraph 5 of its resolution 45/264 at its forty-eighth session in the light of the experience of the reforms agreed upon, with a view to enhancing the impact and effectiveness of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. Those provisions relate to the continued implementation of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the restructuring and revitalization process and to the arrangements set out for the organizational session and the high-level, coordination, operational activities and committee segments of the substantive session of the Council.

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2. In the light of the reviews which the General Assembly intends to conduct, it seems clear that this report should concentrate essentially on an examination of the implementation of Council resolutions 1988/77, 1989/114 and 1990/69 and decision 1990/205. To the extent, however, that provisions of the above-mentioned resolutions have become moot consequent upon the adoption of General Assembly resolution 45/264, the attention of the Council will be drawn to such instances. In addition, a commentary will be provided on those provisions of Council resolution 1988/64 which warrant review as a result of the roles prescribed for the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (CPC/ACC) in Assembly resolution 45/264.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS ON REVITALIZATION

A. Annual general discussion

3. In its resolution 1988/77, the Council had sought to reorganize the manner in which its annual general discussion was conducted in order to make it more dynamic and to allow enough time for a dialogue and an examination of views between members and executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system. This provision has been superseded by the decision in General Assembly resolution 45/264 to discontinue the annual general discussion. In the light of this clear statement of policy, the Secretary-General intends to assist the Council in making arrangements of an organizational character that would lead to the full implementation of the intent of General Assembly resolution 45/264 with regard to the high-level segment of the Council.

B. Major policy themes

4. In its resolution 1988/77, the Council decided to undertake annual in-depth discussions of previously identified major policy themes selected on the basis of a multi-year work programme. In decision 1990/205, it decided to establish, on a provisional basis, the following multi-year work programme for its in-depth consideration of major policy themes during the period 1992-1994:

1992

The international trade system and its impact on the development of the developing countries

Eradication of poverty in the developing countries, including the impact of structural adjustment programmes on vulnerable groups

1993

Environment and development

Population, development and socio-economic indicators

1994

Technology and industrialization in the development process of the developing countries

International cooperation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs

5. In accordance with the provisions of Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114 and decision 1990/205, the provisional multi-year work programme is to be reviewed annually and adjusted on a roll-over basis as necessary. At its organizational session of 1992, the Council decided that the theme for the high-level segment should be "Enhancing international cooperation for development; the role of the United Nations system", and that the coordination segment should deal with coordination of policies and activities of the organizations and other bodies of the United Nations system relating to the following themes: "Assistance in the eradication of poverty and support to vulnerable groups, including assistance during the implementation of the structural adjustment programmes", and "Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and programmes addressed to the mitigation of its negative socio-economic consequences".

6. The provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/264 do not indicate as to whether the multi-year work programme of major policy themes should continue. In particular, the resolution is silent on the question of whether the major policy themes for the high-level segment should derive from the multi-year work programme. In practice, the Council has decided not to follow the provisional programme it agreed upon in its decision 1990/205 concerning the work programme for in-depth consideration of major policy themes during the year 1992. For his part, the Secretary-General is of the view that it would be unduly restrictive to decide on the major policy theme or themes for the high-level segment as part of a multi-year work programme. The themes to be discussed at the high-level segment appear to fall into the category referred to in paragraph 2 (a) (iii) of Council resolution 1988/77 which anticipates that the Council, as and when necessary, would address urgent and emerging issues relating to acute international economic and social problems. There is also evidently a wish on the part of the Council to have the high-level segment deal with themes of topical importance. The Secretary-General believes, nevertheless, that it would be useful to maintain a multi-year work programme in respect of themes for the coordination segment. General Assembly resolution 45/264 anticipates that discussions on the themes should focus attention on the activities of the United Nations system in selected economic and social areas, taking into account the report of the Secretary-General as chairman of ACC which should contain a system-wide

assessment of the status of coordination with regard to the themes and include recommendations as appropriate. The Secretary-General has been constrained in preparing the system-wide assessments on the selected coordination themes for 1992 owing to the relatively short time between the organizational session of the Council at the beginning of February 1992, at which time the Council selected the themes, and the commencement of the substantive session of the Council at the end of June 1992. The limited time placed at his disposal has made it difficult to engage in system-wide collection and analysis of data and consultations with the specialized agencies or in the identification of recommendations, which the Council would expect such reports to contain. As it is, the reports have not been made available six weeks or sufficiently before the opening of the Council, which is a matter for regret. The Secretary-General would therefore wish to suggest to the Council that it retain a multi-year work programme of themes on a roll-over basis with respect to the discussions to take place in the coordination segment of the Council.

C. Monitoring

7. In accordance with Council resolution 1988/77, the Council is expected to monitor the implementation of the overall strategies, policies and priorities established by the Assembly and the Council. In this regard, the Council requested the Secretary-General to circulate each year to Member States and all organizations of the United Nations system as well as to the Council at its organizational session, a consolidated note on the decisions adopted by the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields, highlighting matters that require action by them; and it further decided that it would obtain information from the specialized agencies on the steps taken to give effect to the recommendations of the General Assembly on the economic, social and related matters that fall within their respective mandates and areas of competence; and further, that the Council should examine in-depth the relevant chapters of the proposed medium-term plan and sections of the proposed programme budget of the United Nations in the light of the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

8. The provisions relating to monitoring in Council resolution 1988/77 have largely been unimplemented. In 1989 the Secretary-General circulated a consolidated note as referred to above. In subsequent years, however, the Secretary-General suspended the circulation of the note which was serving little practical purpose, and the Council has not asked him to reinstitute its circulation. The Council has also not found the time to examine in depth the relevant chapters of the proposed medium-term plan and sections of the proposed programme budget of the United Nations. The Council has also taken no action to obtain information from the specialized agencies on the steps taken to give effect to the recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council on matters falling within their respective mandates and areas of competence.

9. In previous reports to the Council, the Secretary-General has stressed the importance of the monitoring function and the need for the Council to

adopt a more systematic approach to exercising it. He has put forth a number of suggestions in this regard which he now wishes to repeat. 1/ The Council might therefore wish to consider the following:

(a) Conducting a periodic review of the progress made in the implementation of the International Development Strategy, which provides a framework incorporating policies and priorities agreed upon by Governments and covering various sectors of the United Nations system activities;

(b) Considering specific modalities for follow-up and monitoring when adopting resolutions;

(c) Requesting ACC to assist in reviewing and monitoring the implementation of overall policy guidelines and priorities, particularly in respect of their translation into mutually complementary or jointly planned activities.

10. It was also proposed that in preparing the draft programme of work for consideration by the Council, the Secretary-General could draw attention to policies and priorities that the Council should monitor and put forward suggestions on how these should be monitored.

D. Operational activities for development

11. In its resolution 1988/77, the Council elaborated its role in regard to operational activities for development. The Council decided that it should recommend to the General Assembly overall priorities and policy guidelines for operational activities for development. In the context of its coordination function, it should try to ensure greater coherence and effectiveness in the activities of the United Nations system; address a limited number of policy coordination issues each year, including those identified in General Assembly resolution 42/196; carry out, once every three years, a comprehensive policy review; and monitor the follow-up to its recommendations. It also decided that the subject of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and system-wide coordination of those activities should be considered by its Third (Programme and Coordination) Committee.

12. In practice, the linkage between the exercise by the Council of its coordination functions and its responsibilities for operational activities within the context of the measures enacted in Council resolution 1988/77 has not proved easy to effect. The Secretary-General had previously suggested that Member States might wish to review ways and means of clarifying and strengthening capacities for exercising governance and providing overall guidance by establishing, within the framework of the Council, an operational activities committee entrusted with the responsibility of undertaking in-depth reviews of policies and principles on the basis of information provided by individual governing bodies. In this regard, the Council will have before it at the session an analytical report on strengthening the operational activities of the United Nations system including the governance and financing

aspects thereof (decision 46/465). Meanwhile, the General Assembly, in its resolution 45/264 established an operational activities segment of the Council devoted to operational activities of the United Nations system focusing, in particular, on the follow-up of policy recommendations and decisions of the General Assembly and coordination of operational activities on a system-wide basis, taking account of Council resolution 1988/77. The triennial review would be undertaken first by the Council and thereafter by the General Assembly.

13. The decision to provide a specific institutional focus for considering operational activities through the establishment of an operational activities segment of the Council is an indication that the Council is still seeking ways and means to best fulfil its responsibilities in this area. More thought may yet need to be given by the Council as to how to strengthen its institutional capacity to deal with the issue of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

E. Coordination

14. The coordination function is one of the most important responsibilities devolving on the Council under the Charter. The revitalization resolutions have recognized the need for the Council to fully exercise these responsibilities as an indispensable aspect of the revitalization process. Towards this end, Council resolution 1988/77 had determined, inter alia, that the specialized agencies should be invited to resume submission of analytical summaries of their annual reports for consideration by the Council; that the executive heads of the specialized agencies or their senior representatives should participate actively in the deliberations of the Council; and that coordination instruments such as the Joint Meetings of the CPC/ACC and reports of the ACC and its subsidiary bodies should be rationalized in order to enable the Council to carry out its coordination functions in an effective manner. At the same time, in its resolution 44/194, the General Assembly requested, inter alia, the ACC to modify substantially the format and content of the annual overview report in the light of the relevant conclusions and recommendations of the CPC at its twenty-ninth session. 2/ On the subject of the Joint Meetings of the CPC/ACC, the Council further decided in its resolution 1988/64 to hold the Joint Meetings in New York in conjunction with the autumn session of the ACC in order to facilitate the participation of the members of CPC at a high level as well as the participation of the executive heads of the specialized agencies.

15. Since the adoption of Council resolution 1988/77, the specialized agencies have been making available annual reports to the Council to which attention has been regularly drawn by the Secretary-General. Those reports have rarely been the subject of discussion in the Council. Executive heads of the specialized agencies have been participating in the Council's annual general discussions as well as in informal exchanges of views with members of the Council. The latter exercise has proved a valuable means of communication and dialogue between Council members and executive heads.

16. With regard to the format and content of the ACC reports, the recommendations of the CPC were taken into account and have been followed in the preparation of subsequent reports. In addition, as indicated in the foreword of the Secretary-General to the annual report of ACC for 1991, 3/ the ACC has decided to undertake a comprehensive review of its role and functioning. Information on the progress made in carrying out this review will be covered in the annual report for 1992.

17. The provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/264 built on the revitalization resolutions by taking additional measures to allow the Council to more effectively carry out its responsibilities for the coordination of the activities of the specialized agencies, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in the economic, social and related fields, in accordance with Articles 63 and 64 of the Charter of the United Nations. The substantive session of the Council of 1992 will be the first opportunity for these new measures to take effect. It is already evident, however, that an adjustment will be required to the current arrangements for the Joint Meetings since these arrangements are not compatible with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/264. That resolution calls for the themes for the coordination segment to be decided at the organizational session of the Council, taking into account the recommendations of the Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC; and for the coordination segment to benefit from the recommendations of the Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC and from CPC itself. With the Joint Meetings taking place in the autumn, it would certainly be possible for recommendations on the themes to be selected to be submitted to the organizational session of the Council in the following year as was the case on this occasion. However, as long as the Joint Meetings continue to take place in the autumn and CPC continues to hold its main session in May, there would be no opportunity for the Joint Meetings to review the Secretary-General's reports on the themes, as was the case this year. 4/ Attention is also drawn to the emphasis that has been placed in the relevant Council resolutions on the personal participation of executive heads in the work of both the coordination segment of the Council and the Joint Meetings of the CPC/ACC. Under the current procedures, executive heads are thus expected to participate in discussions on the same thematic reports both at the Joint Meetings and thereafter at the coordination segment of the Council. It would thus seem necessary for the Council to evolve more practical arrangements consistent with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/264. The Council may, therefore, wish to review the present arrangements with respect to the contributions of the CPC and the Joint Meetings to the work of the coordination segment.

F. Working methods and organization of work

18. In accordance with the recommendations contained in Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114, a number of steps have been taken which would help to improve the working methods and organization of work of the Council. In other cases, however, the recommendations have not been implemented. A review of the more relevant recommendations is outlined below.

1. Consolidated agenda items

19. At its organizational sessions of 1989 and 1990, the Council reviewed the recommendations concerning the consolidation of similar or closely related issues under a single agenda item in order to consider and take action on them in an integrated manner. As a result, the number of agenda items before the Council has been reduced. Although this process has resulted in a clustering of items and subitems rather than a true consolidation, it has produced an artificial clustering of a number of items under a broad agenda item, such as that entitled, "Development and international economic cooperation", and a greater number of sub-items. It is suggested that the Council pay particular attention to the need to pursue the issue of consolidating agenda items. The Council has also taken no action to biennialize any items additional to those which were already considered on a biennial basis in 1988.

2. Calendar of conferences

20. In accordance with the request of the Council, the Secretary-General has ensured that meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Council would end at least eight weeks before the session of the Council at which their reports are to be considered. He has been unable to make the same arrangements for most of those bodies whose reports are considered both by the Council and the General Assembly. These bodies are the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Governing Council of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Council (WFC) and CPC. The Council also decided that it should continue to consider further the biennialization of the sessions of its subsidiary bodies. However, no action has been taken by the Council to biennialize the meetings schedule of any of its subsidiary bodies which, in 1988, had been accustomed to meeting annually. These bodies are the Commission on Transnational Corporations, the Commission on Human Rights, and the Commission on the Status of Women (to the year 2000). In addition, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs now meets, to all intent and purposes, on an annual basis; the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, established by the Council in its resolution 1992/1 of 6 February 1992, also meets annually.

G. Documentation

21. In both resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114, the Council expressed concern about the content and timeliness of the documentation being submitted to it. In 1989 and 1990 the Council established an open-ended task force on documentation which examined a number of issues, and during the course of the same year the President of the Council and members of the Bureau held informal meetings with members of the Council to review the status of preparation of documentation. The recommendations of the task force (see E/1990/93) have not been applied consistently. Since 1991, however, less attention has been focused on issues relating to the quality and timeliness of documentation. In particular, the question of the preparation of issue-oriented consolidated

reports has not been pursued. Only the recommendation relating to reports before the Council being prefaced by an executive summary has been implemented with some consistency.

22. The Secretary-General considers that improvement in the documentation situation to be one of the most important challenges facing the Council as it continues to pursue the revitalization process. To put it simply, the number of documents requested by the Council is greater than the Secretariat can produce in a timely manner, while striving to ensure high quality. Council members are all too aware that, as a consequence of the late submission and production of reports, they do not have sufficient time to give those documents due study and attention. While it is certainly true that repeated requests by the Council for the Secretariat to act in full compliance with the six-week rule have not succeeded in assuring early availability of documents, this has not been for lack of effort or goodwill on the part of the Secretariat.

23. Documentation is generated from two sources: one is the standing mandates of the subsidiary bodies that report to the Council; the other derives from requests for documentation contained in resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council under various agenda items. For documentation to be reduced, the Council has two options. It can reduce the number of its subsidiary bodies or it can exercise restraint in its requests for documentation under particular agenda items. The Council can also exercise both options. In regard to the latter, a reduction in the number of agenda items before the Council either through further consolidation of items or a further biennialization should be considered. Without measures of this nature being taken, it is unlikely that the quality and timeliness of the documentation submitted to the Council can be improved.

H. Election of the Bureau and preparations for the organizational session

24. In Council resolution 1988/77, the Council decided that it would elect its President and Bureau early in the calendar year prior to the organizational session of the Council and that the President, with the cooperation of the other members of the Bureau, should arrange in advance of the organizational session, for consultations with members of the Council on the draft programme of work and provisional agenda prepared by the Secretary-General and on the allocation of agenda items and make proposals thereon for consideration by the Council; the duration of the organizational session of the Council could consequently be shortened.

25. These provisions have been fully implemented with effect from calendar year 1989. The President and the Bureau are now normally elected in the middle or the third week of January and immediately commence informal consultations on the draft programme of work and provisional agenda with members of the Council. These prior consultations have not, however, served, in real terms, to shorten the duration of the organizational session.

Although the organizational session usually ends on the same day scheduled for its conclusion with less use being made of the official number of meetings allocated to it, in effect, more rather than less time is being taken to deal with the issues before the organizational session through extensive informal consultations. Bearing in mind the increased importance which the organizational session has assumed and the fact that the Council will now hold only one substantive session a year, the Secretary-General is none the less of the view that the new arrangements are working well in practice and should be maintained.

I. Secretariat support

26. In its resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114, the Council had called for the establishment of a separate and identifiable secretariat support structure for the Council which would undertake the substantive functions and technical servicing needed to implement various aspects of the aforementioned resolutions. As a result of the restructuring of the Secretariat which the Secretary-General has implemented, there has been established within the Department of Economic and Social Development a Division of Economic and Social Council Affairs and Inter-Agency Coordination. This Division will be responsible for servicing the high-level, coordination and other segments of the Council as well as its subsidiary bodies.

Notes

1/ See E/1989/95, para. 60 and E/1990/75, para. 28.

2/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/44/16).

3/ See E/1992/11/Add.2.

4/ The question of establishing a multi-year work programme for themes to be considered at the coordination segment is related to the considerations advanced in this section of the present report.

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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Sixteenth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In its decision 1992/212 of 7 February 1992, the Economic and Social Council decided that the sixteenth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would be held in Bahrain from 27 to 30 April 1992. The Secretariat has subsequently been informed of the withdrawal of the invitation of the Government of Bahrain to host the session.

2. The Secretary-General, with the concurrence of the Executive Secretary of the Commission, proposes that the sixteenth session of the Commission should be held in Amman from 30 August to 3 September 1992.

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REGIONAL COOPERATION

Admission of new members to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and amendment of the terms of reference of the Commission

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, at its forty-eighth session held in Beijing from 14 to 23 April 1992, considered the applications of Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan for membership in that Commission and recommended to the Economic and Social Council for their inclusion in the geographical scope of the Commission and their admission as members of the Commission (see E/1992/65, sect. I.A).

2. Following that session, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on 20 May 1992, addressed a formal communication to the Executive Secretary of the Commission conveying the decision of that Government to seek membership in the Commission. Following consultations with the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, the Executive Secretary brought the application of Uzbekistan to the attention of the Chairman and the members of the Commission and requested that their views be conveyed to him by 15 June. In that communication, he also informed them that if no contrary views were received by that date, he would recommend to the Secretary-General that the application of the Republic of Uzbekistan for membership in the Commission be conveyed to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 1992 and action, along with the recommendation of the Commission for membership of the four other countries as mentioned above.

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3. As at 15 June, many responses have been received from members of the Commission in support of the membership of Uzbekistan. No contrary view was received. In the light of those developments, the Secretary-General is pleased to convey the application of Uzbekistan to the Council, which may wish to consider and accept that application for full membership in the Commission. Accordingly, the Council may amend paragraphs 2 and 3 of the terms of reference of the Commission to include the Republic of Uzbekistan in the geographical scope of the Commission and approve its admission as a member of the Commission, when it considers the recommendation of the Commission with regard to Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

4. The Executive Secretary also received on 16 June 1992 a similar formal communication dated 25 May 1992 from the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan requesting the admission of that country as a member of the Commission. Since this case is similar in nature to that of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Secretary-General is also pleased to convey the application of Kazakhstan for full membership in the Commission, for the Council's consideration and acceptance. The Executive Secretary had, in line with the earlier procedure followed, brought urgently the application of Kazakhstan to the attention of the Chairman and the members of the Commission, with the request that any contrary views should be communicated to him by 26 June 1992, for bringing the same to the attention of the Council when the application is considered by it. A favourable decision on the application of Kazakhstan by the Council will entail revision of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the terms of reference of the Commission to also include that Republic in the geographical scope of the Commission and as a member of the Commission.

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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Requests from non-governmental organizations for hearings

Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, acting in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) and rule 84 of the Council's rules of procedure, met at United Nations Headquarters on 25 June 1992 under the chairmanship of Annie Marie Sundbom (Sweden) to hear requests from non-governmental organizations in consultative status, category I, for hearings by the Council or its sessional committees in connection with items on the Council's agenda.

2. The Committee decided to recommend that the organizations listed below be heard under the agenda item indicated:

CONFERENCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN - EQUAL RIGHTS, EQUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary

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Item 12.	Development and international economic cooperation:	Economic Committee
	(a) Implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade	
	(k) Prevention and control of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS)	
Item 17.	Human rights questions	Social Committee
Item 18.	Advancement of women	Social Committee

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary
Item 12.	Development and international economic cooperation:	Economic Committee
	(a) Implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade	
	(b) Trade and development	
	(e) Transnational corporations	
Item 17.	Human rights questions	Social Committee
Item 18.	Advancement of women	Social Committee
Item 19.	Social development questions:	Social Committee
	(b) Social development	

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES		
Item 3.	Coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system related to the following themes:	Plenary
	(b) Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and programmes addressed to the mitigation of its negative socio-economic consequences	
Item 9.	Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance	Plenary
Item 14.	Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster	Economic Committee
INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT ATD FOURTH WORLD		
Item 17.	Human rights questions	Social Committee
Item 19.	Social development questions	Social Committee
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF CONSUMERS UNIONS		
Item 12.	Development and international economic cooperation	Economic Committee
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION		
Item 17.	Human rights questions	Social Committee
Item 18.	Advancement of women	Social Committee
IPS - INTER-PRESS SERVICE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE		
Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary
Item 6.	Coordination questions:	
	(c) International cooperation in the field of informatics	Plenary

MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary

WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary
Item 12.	Development and international economic cooperation	Economic Committee

WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary

WORLD MUSLIM CONGRESS

Item 2.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	Plenary
Item 17.	Human rights questions	Social Committee

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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Request for inclusion of an additional item in the provisional agenda of the substantive session of 1992

Letter dated 25 June 1992 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As you are aware, a number of important decisions taken at the recently concluded United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), including the agreement on establishment of a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development in accordance with Article 68 of the Charter of the United Nations, will have a direct bearing on the future work of the Economic and Social Council. Given the importance of these developments, my Government believes that the Council should be informed of them during its forthcoming session.

While it may be possible to discuss UNCED follow-up under an existing agenda item, such as item 21 (Establishment of new subsidiary bodies of the Council), it may be more appropriate to address the matter as a separate agenda item. If you agree that a separate agenda item would be more appropriate, I take this opportunity to request the inclusion of the following supplementary agenda item: Post-UNCED institutional arrangements. Attached is a supporting statement as required by rule 12 of the rules of procedure of the Council (see annex).

(Signed) Alexander F. WATSON
Ambassador

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* E/1992/100.

Annex

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A REQUEST TO PLACE ON THE AGENDA OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AN ITEM ON POST-UNCED INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

United States of America

A number of important decisions taken at the recently concluded United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), including the agreement on establishment of a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development in accordance with Article 68 of the Charter of the United Nations, will have a direct bearing on the future work of the Economic and Social Council.

While recognizing that definitive action will be taken by the General Assembly, we believe it is important that the Council have the opportunity for a preliminary discussion of the issue and to provide input for the General Assembly deliberations. We consider this matter to be of considerable urgency, as the Council should not be overlooked in the process of UNCED follow-up. The United States did not raise this issue when the Council was considering its provisional agenda during its organizational session because it was considered appropriate to await the conclusion of UNCED before determining whether inscription of an additional item was warranted.

In light of developments at UNCED, and the importance the United States attaches to both post-UNCED follow-up and the functioning and relevance of a revitalized Economic and Social Council, the United States now requests the inclusion of an item on post-UNCED institutional arrangements in the current agenda of the Council.

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high-level segment*
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 22 June 1992 from the Permanent Representatives of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, we have the honour to present herewith a joint Nordic memorandum on reform of United Nations governance and finance.

We should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter, with the attached text, circulated as an official document of the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1992, under item 2 of the high-level segment and item 4 (Operational activities for development segment) of its provisional agenda.

(Signed) Bent HAAKONSEN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Denmark
to the United Nations

(Signed) Wilhelm BREITENSTEIN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Finland
to the United Nations

(Signed) Martin HUSLID
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Norway
to the United Nations

(Signed) Peter OSVALD
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Sweden
to the United Nations

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Annex

Nordic memorandum on reform of United Nations governance and finance

1. THE CASE FOR REFORM

1.1. The role of the United Nations in development

The new world that is now being shaped may open up the possibility of a more creative and forward-looking role for the United Nations, with its activities in the security and development field being mutually supportive.

The challenge for the organizations of the United Nations system is to play a leading role in supporting national Governments in their efforts to master increasingly complex issues in an interdependent world. The United Nations should be in a unique position to formulate policies that will not only facilitate economic growth but also take into consideration social and human development, cultural dimensions and environmental aspects.

The work of the United Nations will be relevant only if its performance is of high quality. Reviews of the field performance of United Nations agencies have shown that Governments make use of the United Nations system for advice on vital policy and development issues only to a limited degree. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has not been able to fully utilize its network capacity and potential ability to address policy issues.

Improved governance and improved financing are important elements in the ongoing reform process that should lead to increased importance and effectiveness of United Nations operational activities.

1.2. The need for systemic reforms

The thrust of the work of the Nordic United Nations project reflects an ambition to better translate principles of rights and obligations into rules and norms to promote a stronger sense of partnership among Member States.

The final report of the Nordic United Nations project, presented last year, particularly points out how closely the issues of governance and finance are intertwined. Indeed, the inherent difficulties of the United Nations financing system can be interpreted as reflecting underlying governance problems.

The Charter of the United Nations did not foresee an operational role for the United Nations in the economic and social fields, and it provides little guidance on distribution of powers and responsibilities.

Overlapping and duplication of work, limited responsiveness as well as lack of transparency and accountability have prevented the system from acquiring sufficient financing or the "critical mass" necessary to play a leading role in international development issues, thus realizing the full potential of its comparative advantages.

It has become increasingly difficult for Member States to get an overview of the diverse development activities now taking place in the various United Nations institutions or to meaningfully deal with them.

An important objective ahead will be to optimize the impact of the multilateral system as a whole. In an increasingly interdependent world, more and more issues need to be resolved within the framework of multilateral cooperation. This requires a stronger and more efficient United Nations. It also emphasizes the need to improve the funding system.

2. IMPROVED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

2.1. Weaknesses in the present system of governance

Basically, the system of governance, leadership and funding needed for the political "meeting place" function is distinctly different from that needed for the operative or "executive" function. This has important implications for the design of United Nations activities. It is considered important that the respective roles and tasks of different organizations and bodies within the system be better defined to complement each other and to form a coherent whole.

The governance of United Nations development activities at the highest level is fragmented. At present governance functions are delegated to an array of councils and boards that deal separately with each organization. There is need for a body to give effective high-level guidance and cohesion to the executive organs of the United Nations operational activities.

At the same time there is need for a body for each programme and fund to provide operational guidance to the Organization.

The sessions of many governing bodies have become huge gatherings simultaneously dealing with a wide spectrum of matters at different levels of governance, from overall political issues to micro-management. New, small, governing bodies that would meet more frequently, are needed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

2.2. An improved governance structure

Governance reform objectives

The governance reform proposal of the Nordic United Nations project advocates inter alia a division of responsibility under the General Assembly at two different levels.

Key objectives and considerations in the design of a new governance structure should be the following:

(a) To increase the importance and impact of United Nations intergovernmental bodies in the international policy-dialogue on development issues;

(b) To improve the impact of United Nations development cooperation through effective policy-making and priority-setting regarding operational activities for development;

(c) To increase the responsiveness of United Nations funds and programmes to governing body decisions, through greater transparency and accountability in the interface between governance and management;

(d) To ensure that principles of universality and representation are combined with good and effective governance.

Policy guidance and priority-setting: the functions of an International Development Council

In order to fulfil the above objectives and considerations there is a need to assign to a single body the task of high level discussion on development issues and the provision of policy guidance to the United Nations system in its development activities. These functions regarding operational development activities are distinct from other issues tackled in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations.

For the sake of illustration the Nordic countries have defined these functions as functions of an International Development Council (IDC). The intention is not to propose establishment of a new body, but to underline that these are a set of functions that belong together and should be designated as a responsibility to some existing body.

The concrete IDC functions could be broken down as follows:

(a) To establish overall objectives and operational strategies for key areas in international development cooperation;

(b) To discuss the mandates, powers, structures and the division of labour of United Nations intergovernmental and executive bodies in order to avoid any gaps or duplications;

(c) To give policy guidance to the United Nations operational activities including the distribution of tasks among the various actors and coordination within the system;

(d) To review and discuss the reports on the work of funds and programmes.

While several options for integrating the IDC functions into present United Nations structure exist, they should preferably be delegated to one of the existing bodies, as the creation of new bodies should be avoided.

The options for integrating the IDC functions into the present structure include the following:

(a) The Economic and Social Council as at present (it should, however, be noted that the Council has a limited membership);

(b) Merging of the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly;

(c) The Council to be strengthened and enlarged to become a universal body being in session in parallel with the General Assembly; the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly to be abolished.

The guiding principle in any option should be to establish a clear division of roles and mandates between the General Assembly and the Council in order to avoid the present overlapping and duplication of work between these two governance layers.

Operational governance: small executive bodies

The establishment of a small executive body for each of the United Nations funds and programmes would be an integral element in the new governance structure, with the key function of providing a link between the member States and the management of each organization. These bodies would primarily exercise operational governance, which includes:

(a) Monitoring the performance of the funds and programmes;

(b) Assuming that the mandates, policies, priorities and strategies set by higher-level governing bodies are carried out, and in a transparent manner;

(c) Deciding on plans and budgets;

(d) Encouraging and examining new programme initiatives.

The mode of work and the composition of the small executive bodies should reflect the United Nations basic character of a joint and shared undertaking between the economically more developed countries and the developing countries. The principles of composition should strike a balance between representation and efficiency, with the following considerations:

(a) The size would be limited to 15-20 members;

(b) Members would represent groups of member States in the form of constituencies, taking into account i.e. regional balance between developed and developing countries, with the possibility of a representation of 50 per cent from recipient countries and 50 per cent from donor countries;

(c) Members would be chosen within each constituency;

(d) Size of contributions to United Nations operational activities for development would be taken into account in the composition of constituencies among donor countries;

(e) Continuity in membership would be secured through a three-year period of service of the executive body members.

The executive bodies would work on the basis of the principle of consensus. In cases of disagreement, decisions could e.g. be taken by "double majority" i.e. majority among the recipient constituency and majority among the donor constituency.

3. A NEW FINANCIAL SYSTEM

3.1. Weakness in the present financial system

Erratic growth in funding levels

Full use of the capacity, development experience and knowledge of a reformed United Nations development system can be achieved only if increasing and predictable financing is ensured on a broader fund-sharing basis than is the case today.

The pattern of financing of various parts of the United Nations system do not correspond to any clear principles. A myriad of special-purpose contributions, trust funds and other extrabudgetary arrangements have made it increasingly difficult for both donors and recipients to identify where priorities and decisions are made and thus guide and control activities.

With close to 120 trust funds in the United Nations and similar total numbers in the agencies, there has been a considerable proliferation of funding mechanisms with a corresponding erosion of accountability, transparency and priorities. The funds are mostly outside the decision-making powers of the governing bodies.

From the perspective of funding levels, the picture is one of initially promising growth in the 1970s, through decline in the early 1980s, to modest growth over the past few years. This general trend covers important differences between different parts of the system.

The above picture is explained by several factors: currency fluctuations, recession in the early 1980s, changing priorities etc. However, the funding mechanisms, as such, have played a key role in shaping patterns with negative features, such as unpredictability, instability and unsatisfactory funding levels.

Lack of relations between programme objectives and available resources

The funding mechanisms of the United Nations funds and programmes have an ad hoc and short-term character. It was not until the mid-1970s that steps were taken to attempt to bring some minimum measure of order and commitment into what can yet only be described as a rudimentary set of funding mechanisms.

The funding of most United Nations development programmes also depends on a small group of donors. In the case of UNDP, 10 donors provide around 80 per cent of the contributions. The trend in the 1970s and 1980s towards an increasingly uneven sharing of the burden among donors gives cause for considerable concern. This situation is untenable in the long run.

A main drawback of voluntary funding mechanisms is the uncertainties and incoherence they imply in terms of resource levels and the discrepancy between the short term for which pledges are made and the longer term necessary for meaningful planning and administration of technical cooperation programmes.

3.2. A new financial system

A broader funding base

The present funding mechanisms with voluntary contributions to the United Nations do not suffice. In order to increase funding - or to prevent a decline - a new approach must be adopted. It is recognized that a transitional period may be required before a new financial system could come into place.

Appropriate United Nations programmes, which have hitherto exclusively relied on voluntary funding should be provided with a broader funding base combining three sources.

One source of funding would be assessed contributions from all Member States, raising the funding to an amount of maybe about 10 per cent of the total budgets or covering a substantial part of the administrative budget. This "membership fee" would entail the sharing of responsibility between Members.

Assessed contributions should be constructed along a scale of assessment, adjusted to the regular United Nations scale and with due regard to the principle of ability to pay.

The second source would be negotiated pledges, which should raise the bulk of the necessary resources. The objective is to foster a meaningful discussion of medium-term programme activities and their relation to the available resources in one single context as well as a negotiation of the sharing of the burden among donors.

A third source would be voluntary contributions, as at present. This would provide flexibility for Governments to continue to reflect their preferences for various parts of the system through their fundings. This would provide as well for the possibility of receiving contributions from other potential donors. Each organization has its own constituency, and by appealing separately to them can strengthen its case. Weakening the link to constituencies contains the risk of leading to an overall decrease in the funding capabilities of the system. At the same time there is a need to streamline the overall financing windows for operational activities by reducing the number of trust funds.

In the same way there is a need to bring extrabudgetary financing of the operational agencies under the guidance of the governing bodies.

A situation could possibly be envisaged where there is for example a high negotiated share (50-70 per cent), a low assessed share (10 per cent) and a moderate reliance on the voluntary share (20-40 per cent).

It is unlikely to expect that contributions on a purely voluntary basis would be increased, or even maintained, without reforms in the governance system and improved efficiency of the organization. A link exists between governance and financing.

Addendum

THE REFORM PROCESS AND THE NORDIC PROPOSALS

Where are we now?

The final report of the Nordic United Nations project was presented to all the States Members of the United Nations as well as to the Secretary-General in New York in May 1991. It was subsequently presented in the respective capitals through the diplomatic missions of the Nordic countries. At many different meetings and in various international organizations the opportunity was seized to make presentations of the report and its background. So far, around 25,000 copies of the final report have been distributed to interested countries and individuals.

As a next step the Nordic countries introduced their reform proposals at the General Assembly on 31 October 1991 (document A/C.2/46/7). A decision was consequently taken where the Secretary-General was requested to present an analytical report on reform issues, including the Nordic United Nations project proposals, to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in July 1992.

The high-level segment of the Council will inter alia discuss the reform issues under the theme of "Enhancing international cooperation for development: the role of the United Nations system".

It should also be mentioned that reform of the United Nations handling of emergencies was an integral part of the final report of the Nordic project one year ago: member nations decided to act on this issue last year in the Council and the General Assembly. Decisions were taken in December 1991 to create better coordination. A new post of Under-Secretary-General for this purpose was introduced in the beginning of the current year.

The final report of the Nordic United Nations project also dealt with reform of the United Nations Secretariat, an issue which the new Secretary-General acted swiftly upon in February of this year.

The present work is therefore concentrated on the following three issues: mandates and roles of various entities in the United Nations governance and financing structures of the operational activities of the United Nations proper.

However, there seems to be a generally held view that the reform of the operational activities of the United Nations would be incomplete if it did not encompass also the specialized agencies, which were included in the background studies of the Nordic United Nations project. Thus, it is to be expected that reform proposals concerning the specialized agencies will be formulated at a later stage.

The future process

It is expected that the discussions at the high-level segments of the Council's agenda this summer will further demonstrate the need for reform and promote the basic ideas as developed in the Nordic memorandum and in the final report of the Nordic United Nations project. In line with the new procedures introduced to the Council in 1991, it is further expected that the Chairman will make a summary of discussions and conclusions, which will then form guidelines for the discussions and decisions to be taken in the General Assembly.

Consultations will be required to develop and implement an agreed formula for new governance structures and new ways of financing operational activities. This formula will involve responsibilities and changes, both with regard to the United Nations Secretariat and the various funds and programmes. The application should follow the principles and guidelines as decided but with some flexibility according to what is deemed as most suitable in different forums.

Considering the complexity of the issues underlying the proposed new principles and guidelines, member countries may want to consider the format of the deliberations in the Assembly. Member countries may want to promote a

more active participation from the capitals than is usually the case, given the special character of reforms to be considered.

This last point may be further underscored by the fact that both the Council and the Assembly in 1992 are expected to deal with the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including the institutional consequences in the United Nations. At the time of writing, the institutional consequences resulting from these deliberations are still open.